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Central Connecticut State University  
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April 14, 2011

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Dr. John W. Miller  
President  
Central Connecticut State University  
1615 Stanley Street  
New Britain, CT 06050-4010

Dear President Miller:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on March 2, 2011, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University and voted to take the following action:

that the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University be accepted;

that the University submit a fifth-year interim report for consideration in Fall 2013;

that, in addition to the information included in all interim reports, and the matters articulated in the Commission's letter of April 7, 2009, the University give emphasis to its continued progress in developing and implementing a systematic and broad-based program of student learning assessment across the institution;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Fall 2018 be confirmed.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The report submitted by Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) was accepted because it responded to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of April 7, 2009.

The Commission commends CCSU for the initial steps taken since 2008 to develop and implement a systematic, broad-based, and comprehensive program of student learning assessment. Almost all academic departments (95%) submit annual degree program assessment reports as well as assessments of the general education courses they offer, and the Academic Assessment Committee (AAC) reviews the reports and provides feedback on a multi-year cycle. We note favorably that the Office of Institutional

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Research and Assessment administers three externally benchmarked instruments: a System-wide Survey of Graduates, the National Survey of Student Engagement, and the Collegiate Learning Assessment. Student Affairs units use a variety of assessment instruments which are increasingly focused on measuring learning outcomes in addition to measuring satisfaction. Finally, the institution has made progress in using the results of assessments in decision-making, such as in implementing the "Early Academic Warning System," which allows the institution to intervene early enough in the semester to assist students who are struggling.

Commission policy requires a fifth-year interim report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution's current status in keeping with the policy on Periodic Review. In addition to the information included in all fifth-year reports and the matters articulated in the Commission letter of April 7, 2009, the University is asked, in Fall 2013, to report on its progress with the assessment of student learning related to our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *The Academic Program*.

Despite the early progress described above, however, CCSU acknowledges – and we concur – that much more work remains to be accomplished. Accordingly, we are pleased to learn that the institution has begun two additional initiatives, incorporating data from the academic departments into a centralized database, and working with Student Affairs to design its own internal assessment reporting and feedback cycle similar to the AAC reviews (cited above). As part of the fifth-year interim report to be submitted in Fall 2013, we look forward to learning about CCSU's success with these initiatives and with other efforts designed to ensure a systematic and broad-based program of student learning assessment across the University. Our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *The Academic Program* provide useful guidance here:

The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the achievement of its mission and purposes, giving primary focus to the realization of its educational objectives. Its system of evaluation is designed to provide relevant and trustworthy information to support institutional improvement, with an emphasis on the academic program. The institution's evaluation efforts are effective for addressing its unique circumstances. These efforts use both quantitative and qualitative methods (2.4).

The institution uses a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to understand the experiences and learning outcomes of its students. Inquiry may focus on a variety of perspectives, including understanding the process of learning, being able to describe student experiences and learning outcomes in normative terms, and gaining feedback from alumni, employers, and others situated to help in the description and assessment of student learning. The institution devotes appropriate attention to ensuring that its methods of understanding student learning are trustworthy and provide information useful in the continuing improvement of programs and services for students (4.50).

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Fall 2018 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years.

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Central Connecticut State University and hopes that its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation in the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Richard

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Balducci. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with Commission policy.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, Director of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Jo Maydew".

Mary Jo Maydew

MJM/jm

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Richard Balducci